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10 November 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, Human Resources Committee and
Chairman, Advisory Group on Open-Source Intelligence

FROM:

[redacted]
Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

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SUBJECT: FBIS-DIA/DT Coordination in Processing Open-Source
S&T Literature [redacted]

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1. I welcome the opportunity to comment on HRC-81-102 and appreciate your courtesy in making it available in draft. [redacted]

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2. Coordination among the various agencies engaged in processing open-source S&T literature is unquestionably warranted. However, it is our understanding that the report of the HRC/STIC Working Group on Processing of Overt S&T Intelligence Information--of which the chief of our S&T Branch, [redacted], is a member--is readying its recommendations for completion in December, possibly in time for the next meeting of the Advisory Group on Open Source Intelligence. These recommendations presumably will address the subject of coordinating the production of S&T abstracts. I believe it would be premature at this time to take coordinating action with FTD in directions the S&T community may not ultimately support. I would therefore prefer to defer such action until the Working Group's recommendations are in hand. It is very likely that they will help shape the parameters of discussion along lines more responsive to genuine S&T community interests. [redacted]

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3. As we await the Working Group's views, I believe that there are other aspects of this subject to be considered which will also help shape the course of future discussion. Among them: a) the FBIS/FTD context implies we are talking solely about Soviet S&T processing when in fact we can expect to see increasing exploitation of Chinese, Japanese and European S&T literature; b) even in the Soviet context, more organizations than FBIS and FTD are involved; c) FTD does very little original abstracting (relying primarily instead on source-supplied abstracts and excerpts); d) past discussions of shared responsibilities

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S E C R E T

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have encountered consumer reluctance to share requirements; e) FTD employs a civilian contractor to do its S&T exploitation (which bears on consumer reluctance to share requirements); and f) any eventual decisions we take on this question should be palatable to consumers. These are some, but by no means all, of the questions we will have to address and I think they provide some insight into the dimensions of the subject. Thus, from our viewpoint, we should await the outcome of the Working Group's deliberations.

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4. In sum: FBIS will be happy to participate with FTD, and with other S&T producers, to discuss ways to coordinate the S&T exploitation effort. But we suggest that this wait until the STIC Working Group provides recommendations.

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